



Tab 19

## English Language Proficiency Report

Coordinating Board for Higher Education  
December 8, 2021

### BACKGROUND

Missouri universities with graduate programs regularly assign teaching assistantships to international students. Section 170.012, RSMo, requires all graduate students who did not receive both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language to be tested for their ability to communicate orally in English in a classroom setting. The institutions are required to provide data every two years on the number and language background of all graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and must provide a copy of the institution's policy for selection of GTAs.

### CURRENT STATUS

The Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development surveyed all public universities requesting the information outlined in [170.012, RSMo](#). All institutions responded with the appropriate data for the 2019 and 2020 academic years (Attachment).

Highlights for the reporting period include:

- Ten public universities awarded teaching assignments to graduate students
- The total number of GTAs at public universities decreased in both AY2019 and AY2020. While the decrease in 2020 may be due in part to COVID-19, the total number of GTAs has been decreasing steadily since its peak in 2016. Interestingly, the number of non-native English speaking GTAs, while also lower than 2016, has been slowly increasing and now comprise approximately 30% of all GTAs (see Attachment).
- The largest number of GTAs were enrolled at the University of Missouri – Columbia, which boasted 50.9 percent of all GTAs in Missouri in both AY2019 and AY2020.

While all institutions are required to submit biennial reports to the board, the effectiveness of programs for nonnative English speakers with graduate teaching assistantships is monitored at the institutional level. Missouri's public four-year institutions that assign teaching assistantships to nonnative English speakers have met all the statutory requirements.

### RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item only. The statute that requires the collection of this information does not require DHEWD to take any additional steps.

### ATTACHMENT

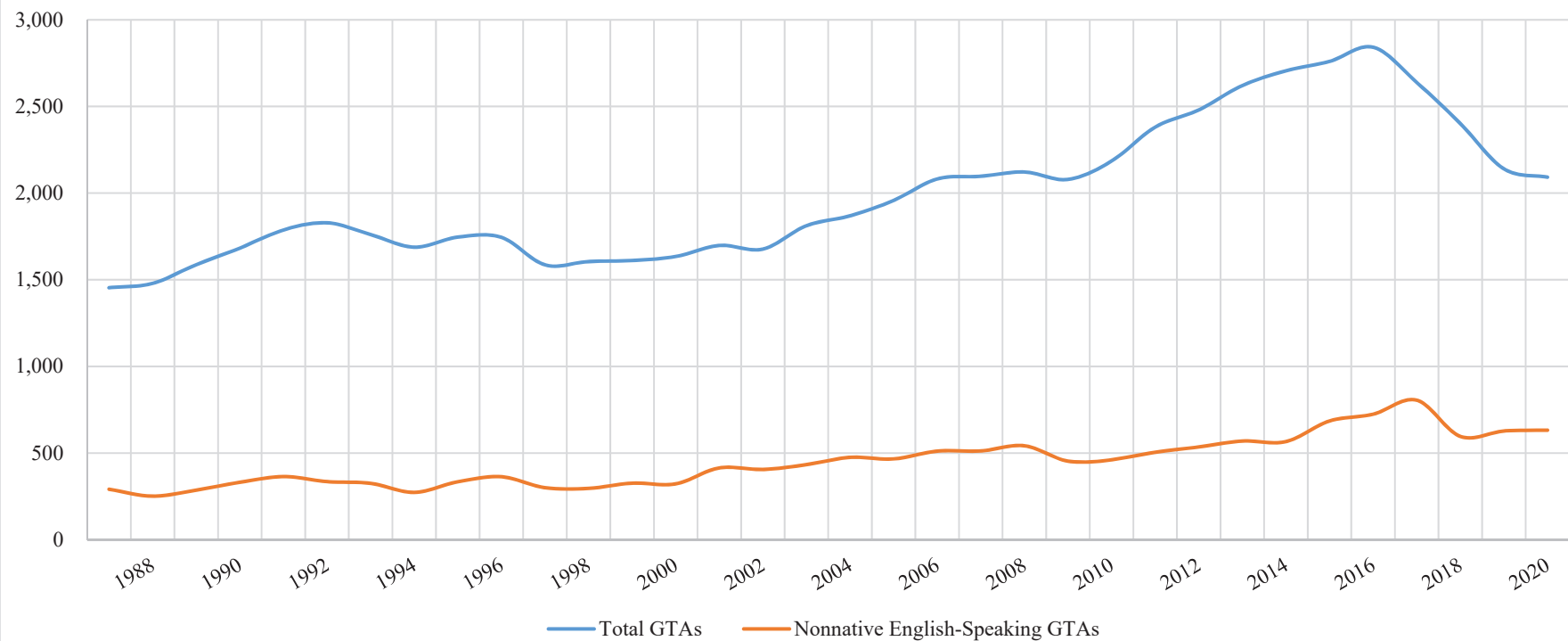
- Results of Biennial Institution Survey on Graduate Teaching Assistants

**Tab 19 Attachment**  
**Results of Biennial Institution Survey on Graduate Teaching Assistants**

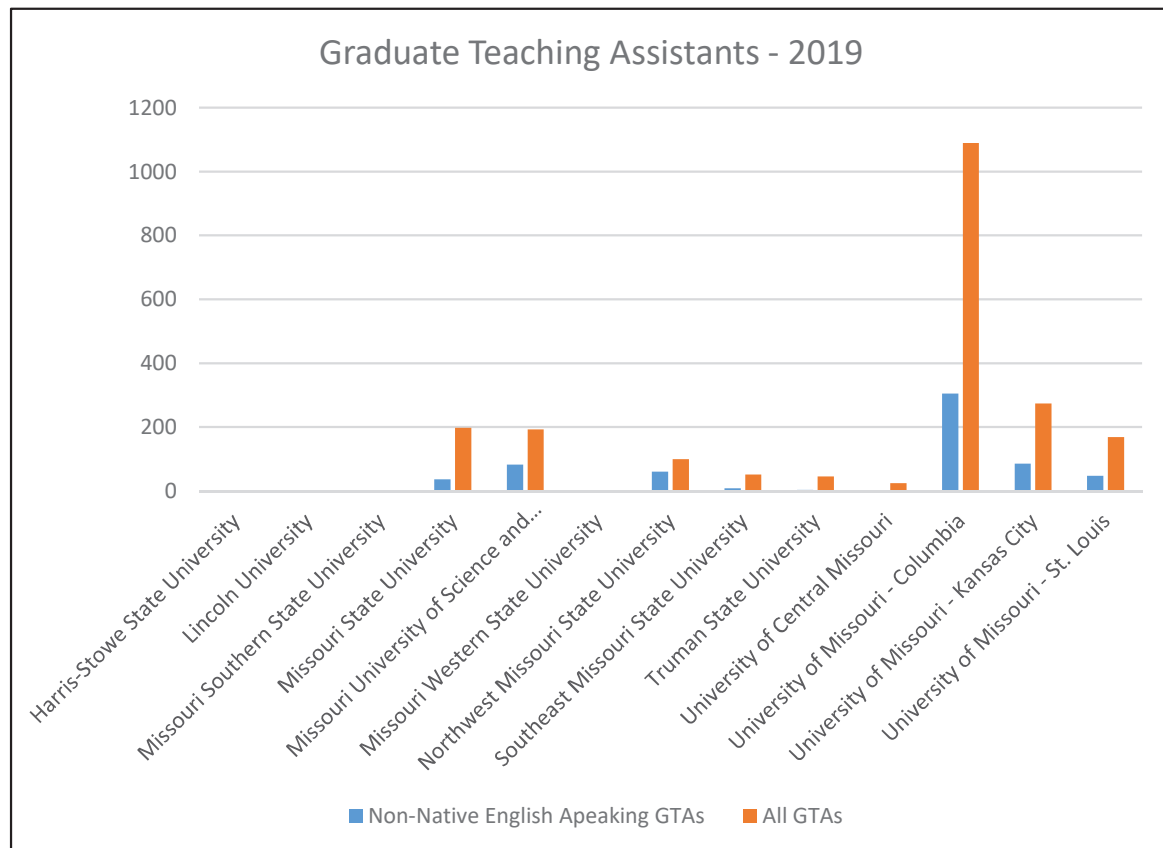
### **Report on English Language Proficiency of Graduate Teaching Assistants**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Nonnative English-Speaking GTAs</b>	<b>NNE GTA Percent of Total</b>
2020	2,094	634	30.28%
2019	2,142	629	29.37%
2018	2,402	596	24.81%
2017	2,639	805	30.50%
2016	2,842	724	25.48%
2015	2,760	685	24.82%
2014	2,706	566	20.92%
2013	2,621	569	21.71%
2012	2,480	535	21.57%
2011	2,381	505	21.21%
2010	2,185	461	21.10%
2009	2,079	453	21.79%
2008	2,122	542	25.54%
2007	2,097	512	24.42%
2006	2,082	511	24.54%
2005	1,958	466	23.80%
2004	1,869	475	25.41%
2003	1,812	433	23.90%
2002	1,677	405	24.15%
2001	1,698	414	24.38%
2000	1,634	322	19.71%
1999	1,611	326	20.24%
1998	1,605	296	18.44%
1997	1,586	300	18.92%
1996	1,745	363	20.80%
1995	1,746	334	19.13%
1994	1,688	273	16.17%
1993	1,761	325	18.46%
1992	1,829	335	18.32%
1991	1,787	364	20.37%
1990	1,682	331	19.68%
1989	1,587	286	18.02%
1988	1,479	251	16.97%
1987	1,454	291	20.01%

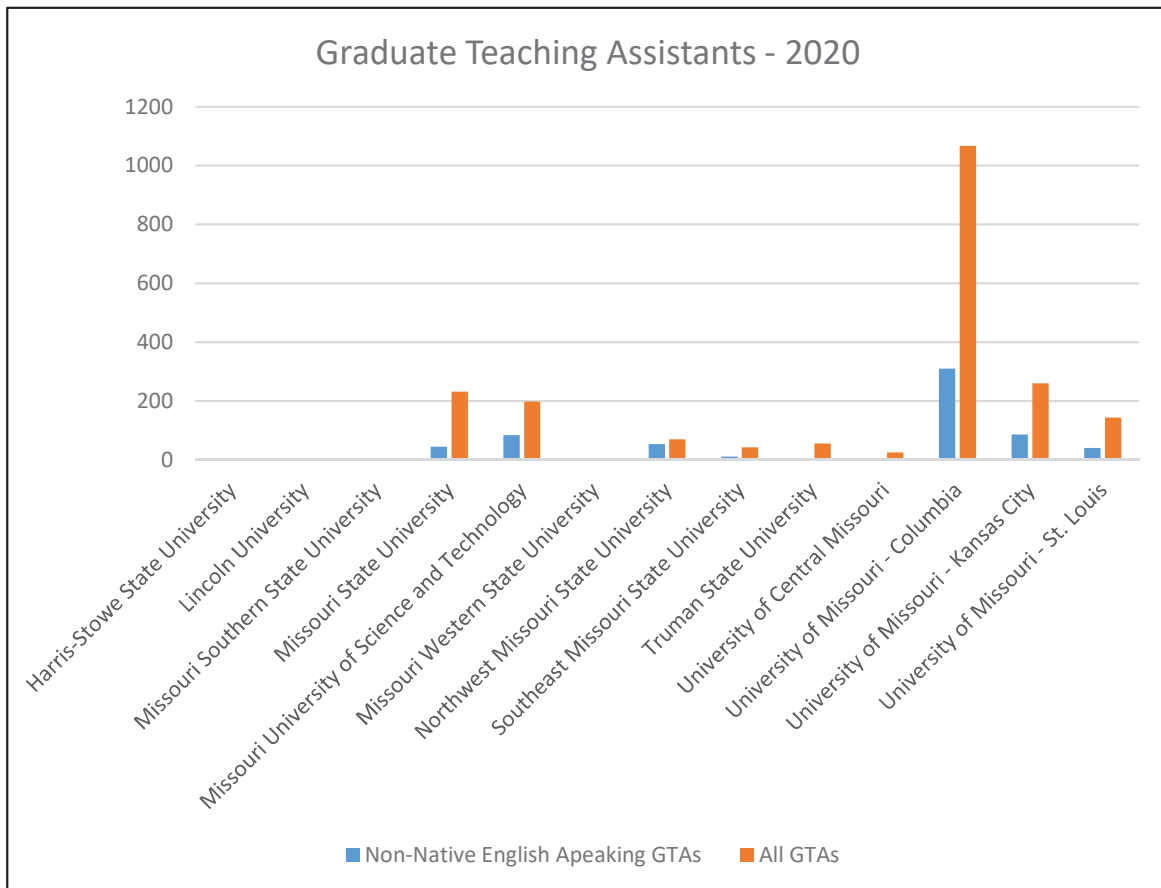
Graduate Teaching Assistants at Missouri Public Universities, 1987 - 2020



AY2019		
School	Non-Native English Apeaking GTAs	All GTAs
Harris-Stowe State University	0	0
Lincoln University	0	0
Missouri Southern State University	0	0
Missouri State University	36	197
Missouri University of Science and Technology	82	192
Missouri Western State University	2	2
Northwest Missouri State University	60	99
Southeast Missouri State University	8	51
Truman State University	3	45
University of Central Missouri	2	24
University of Missouri - Columbia	304	1,089
University of Missouri - Kansas City	85	273
University of Missouri - St. Louis	47	168
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>2,140</b>



AY2020		
School	Non-Native English Apeaking GTAs	All GTAs
Harris-Stowe State University	0	0
Lincoln University	0	0
Missouri Southern State University	0	0
Missouri State University	45	232
Missouri University of Science and Technology	84	198
Missouri Western State University	2	2
Northwest Missouri State University	53	70
Southeast Missouri State University	11	42
Truman State University	2	55
University of Central Missouri	1	25
University of Missouri - Columbia	310	1,066
University of Missouri - Kansas City	86	260
University of Missouri - St. Louis	40	143
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>2093</b>



## **Institution - GTA Policy for non-native English speaking students**

**Harris-Stowe State University** - No graduate teaching assistants

**Lincoln University** - No graduate teaching assistants

**Missouri Southern State University** - The institution requires proof of English language proficiency by earning a minimum passing score on one of five exams including the TOEFL iBT, Pearson's Test of English, and the iTEP.

**Missouri State University** - In accordance with RSMo § 170.012, graduate students who have not lived in the United States and/or did not receive both their primary and secondary education where English was the primary language must receive a cultural orientation, successfully complete one semester of graduate studies at Missouri State University, and demonstrate proficient use of English required in a classroom setting in order to qualify for graduate assistantships with teaching assignments at Missouri State University. Specific procedures for meeting these requirements are provided by the Graduate College.

**Missouri University of Science and Technology** - A student must be admitted as a graduate student, earned at least a bachelor's degree, and have documented competence in the area where they are applying as a Teaching Assistant. Any graduate student who did not receive both his primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language may not serve in a teaching appointment during their first semester of enrollment. In addition, the student must demonstrate English proficiency, as defined in RSMo § 170.012.

**Missouri Western State University** - No graduate teaching assistants

**Northwest Missouri State University** - International students who did not complete both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language must have completed one semester of in-residence graduate work and successfully complete the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Test (SPEAK) before they can be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant or as a Graduate Tutor. A first term international student may apply for research or administrative assistantships if they have the skills required in the job description. Contact the Graduate Office for information about the SPEAK Test.

**Southeast Missouri State University** - Students who did not receive their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language are not allowed to teach in their first semester if they have not previously attended a Missouri public institution. For an exception to be granted by the Provost, the student must demonstrate exceptional oral English language skills through recent exam scores (less than two years from teaching start date).

**Truman State University** - Graduate students who have not received both primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language, cannot teach during their first semester. In order to teach after that time, the student must pass an English Proficiency exam. Truman requires a minimum overall score of: •79 for TOEFL (iBT) •6.0 for IELTS •100 for Duolingo

**University of Central Missouri** - The International Teaching Assistantship Review Team, assesses all international graduate students' language proficiency. Applicants with a score of 55 on the SPEAK test fully meet the English proficiency requirements of UCM and may teach independently in a TA position. Applicants with a score of 50-54 on the SPEAK test partially meet the proficiency requirements and may provide limited independent instruction. Successful completion of an additional ESL Communication Course is required before or during the first semester of teaching. Applicants who receive a score of less than 53 on the SPEAK are ineligible for TA positions. Score results are sent to the applicant and, if applicable, to the academic department by the English Language Institute. Students who have a current TOEFL iBT score of 94 with a sub-score of 23 on the speaking section (IELTS Academic score 7.0 with a sub-score of 7.0 on the speaking section) are exempt from further testing unless required by the academic department.

**University of Missouri - Columbia** - Academic departments at the University of Missouri use the promise of teaching assistantships to attract the best prepared students with the greatest potential as teachers and researchers to our campus. Departments and programs set their own admissions policies in the interest of attracting top-quality students: they choose teaching assistants from the top tier of applicants and use teaching assistantships to train them as future faculty as well as to finance their education. Departments work hand-in-hand with ITAP to make sure that international students have had their language assessed and found sufficient for their specific type of teaching assignment, as well as ensuring that these students have attended the required cultural orientation (ONITA.) For the ease of the departments we work with, departmental responsibilities can be accessed on our website at <https://gradschool.missouri.edu/itap-program>

**University of Missouri - Kansas City** - Attain a qualifying TOEFL or equivalent\* score, attend the SGS GTA/GI Cultural Orientation, and obtain a passing score on an oral examination of language comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. This is generally a mock lecture presented to a panel of faculty and students.

**University of Missouri - St. Louis** - At UMSL, each graduate program chooses their GTAs, typically from graduate students enrolled in their graduate program. Typical criteria include GPA (>3.0), knowledge of the content area, experience, and availability. Selections are typically made by the graduate committee of the unit, the department chair, the graduate program director, or some combination of those people.